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Literary Cosmotopia and Nationalism in Ariel

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Camilla Fojas, "Literary Cosmopolitism and Nationalism in *Ariel*"
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Abstract: Camilla Fojas, in her paper "Literary Cosmopolitism and Nationalism in *Ariel*," argues that turn-of-the-century cosmopolitan literary texts encoded political interests and that they were concerned with the proper way of being cosmopolitan and national at the same time, of forging literary and diplomatic parity between national and international interests. Unfortunately, this search for balance was beset by rhetorical and ideological prejudices manifest in phobic language about the corrupting forces of cosmopolitan effeminacy on national character. The conflict of cosmopolitanism with nationalism was played out as a kind of war between the sexes, as a gendered battle for dominance. This tension is born out in the critical responses to José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), a text that seeks to reroute the course of national identity through a turn to cosmopolitanism. Although women are excluded from the discursive scene of *Ariel*, its generic form is transgendered and inclusive, its rhetoric contains the possibility of breaking the masculinist coda of nationalism. Also, the parable of the hospitable king restores cosmopolitanism to its fundamental basis in hospitality where the outcast figures of speculation and imagination, of the strange and queer, might find refuge. The rhetoric of *Ariel* is insufferable and its classical boys-only model is tiresomely narrow, yet the refusal of North American materialism is admirable and it ventures onto terrain untraversed by many other modernists. In the end, it retains the most useful model of cosmopolitanism, one forgotten in the relentless drive to be modern.

Camilla FOJAS

Literary Cosmotopia and Nationalism in *Ariel*

This paper is drawn from my forthcoming book, *Cosmopolitanism in the Americas* (volume 7 in the Purdue series of Books in Comparative Cultural Studies

<<http://www.thepress.purdue.edu/series/compstudies.asp>> &

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/>>, West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2005), in which I argue, among other things, that *modernismo* in Latin America was considered a feminine literary vocation. Rafael Ferreres cites Guillermo Díaz Plaja's bold assertion that Spain's generation of 1898 represents a masculine movement, while Spanish-American *modernismo* is feminine; eliciting Ferreres's phobic denunciation; "Good God! If the late Valle-Inclán would have known that he was immersed in a school with feminine features!" ("Santo Díos, si el difunto Valle-Inclán se supiese inmerso en una escuela de rasgos femeninos!") (14). Although to be fair, he also complains of the messy critical permutations of this assertion which he finds inappropriate to literary criticism; instead, he offers a different characterization of how these movements are similar and dissimilar. Nonetheless, the designation of butch-femme versions of the same phenomena suggests a hierarchy that reasserts the butch colonial mastery of Spain. This not only derails larger cosmopolitan concerns for hospitality justice, and freedom from prejudice, it also undermines *modernismo*'s implicit challenge to center-periphery determinations in the field of letters. The phobic reaction to Latin American feminization reflects both gender and sexual anxiety at the same time that it may be read as a defense against colonial subsumption. Yet, the gender of *modernismo* is complicated by continually shifting alliances between a feminized cosmopolitanism and masculine nationalism. Cosmopolitan literary texts encoded political interests, they were concerned with the proper way of being cosmopolitan and national at the same time, of forging literary and diplomatic parity between national and international interests. Unfortunately, this search for balance was beset by ideological prejudices manifest in phobic language about the corrupting forces of femininity on national character. The conflict of cosmopolitanism with nationalism was played out as a kind of war between the sexes, as a gendered battle for dominance. This tension is born out in the critical responses to José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), a text that seeks to reroute the course of national identity through a turn to cosmopolitanism. Like Plato's *Republic*, *Ariel*'s ideal ruling community is the work of dialogue; it is something that is talked about and through conversation, endless discussion and revision, brought into being. Dialogues are often discourses of the nation-state, important public texts in which conversation amongst *men* models the operations of the state. Although, as Roberto González Echevarría notes in his *The Voice of the Masters*, the text is a monologue posing as dialogue (see also González Echevarría

<<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol4/iss2/7/>> on Latin American Literature and comparative literature). The illusion of dialogue gives form to an ideal community; one comprised of men and male youths together and that excludes women from the work of creating national culture. Although women are excluded from the discursive scene of *Ariel*, its generic form is transgendered and inclusive and its rhetoric contains the possibility of breaking the masculinist coda of nationalism.

In *Ariel*, Rodó insists that cosmopolitanism is a necessary part of national formation along with attention to national character and history. Although not strictly dialogue, it approximates dialogue and, most importantly, invites a reaction that is typical of open-ended and didactic forms. There is no interactive discourse within the narrative itself, but there is considerable extra-textual critical dialogue about this foundational and infamous text. One could even say that *Ariel* suffers a violent dissection at the hand of contemporary critics, especially those who hold no vested interest in protecting cultural patrimony. The text is trimmed to a better read, its major ideological diversions are cropped by the critics who bond over the mutilation of *Ariel*. The critical purge focuses its attack on the notion of a national fraternity united platonically through a politics of leisure under the sign of cosmopolitanism. The critics of *Ariel*, for reasons of economy, will be limited to the two most radical surgeons, two critics who although ideologically diverse, make the same fundamental

cuts and abbreviations of the text, namely Roberto Fernández Retamar and Carlos Fuentes. The critical work to dis sever the text fails as the fundamental aim of *Ariel* returns in the inextricable fragment of the parable. Rodó, as many critics have noted, was not the worst of the lot in terms of preciousness and refinement (see, e.g., McClennen <<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol2/iss1/4/>>); however, his *Ariel* spun perhaps the most ambitious tract for a cosmopolitan nationalism that was just a touch too feminine for some. Just left of center, *Ariel* moves conspicuously on the national radar screen and, for this reason, is kept under strict surveillance.

In *Ariel* Rodó makes a scandalous proposition in erecting Ariel of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as the symbol of the Americas. *The Tempest* is set on an island in the Caribbean where Prospero, the magically empowered and recently deposed Duke of Milan and his daughter Miranda are shipwrecked and exiled. Prospero and his company colonize the island and claim its inhabitant, Caliban, as their charge and slave, teaching him their language that he might better serve them. Prospero has one more charge beyond that of his daughter and Caliban, Ariel, an airy spirit in the shape of a man. It is this sense of Ariel as spirit that Rodó draws upon as the symbolic basis of the plan for Latin American cultural sovereignty; "Shakespeare's ethereal Ariel symbolizes the noble, soaring aspect of the human spirit. He represents the superiority of reason and feeling over the base impulses of irrationality. He is generous enthusiasm, elevated and unselfish motivation in all actions, spirituality in culture, vivacity and grace in intelligence" (31) ("Ariel, genio del aire, en el simbolismo de la obra de Shakespeare, la parte noble y alada del espíritu. Ariel es el imperio de la razón y el sentimiento sobre los bajos estímulos de la irracionalidad; es el entusiasmo generoso, el móvil alto y desinteresado en la acción, la espiritualidad de la cultura, la vivacidad y la gracia de la inteligencia") (139). *Ariel* is criticized for an elitist cosmopolitanism of universalist and Enlightenment values -- reason, spirit, intellect. While this is not untrue, the language of the critics tend to elide elite with effete to perform their own special kind of exclusion. In trashing the text, the critics refuse to read beyond its apparent elitism. The critics deride its rhetorical flourishes and precious language as effeminacy, code for homosexuality, and this distaste for the effete is central to attacks on cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism does not mesh with a narrow version of national identity practiced by the more prosaic masculine thinkers of the time who wrote with economy and valued macho political activism over passive feminine writing.

Ariel is dismissed by critics for several reasons that have more or less to do with the attribution to this text of an elitist, opaque, and obscurantist style. Roberto Fernández Retamar begins his essay on Caliban by displacing Ariel with Prospero's other charge, Caliban. The initiating language of the section "Our Symbol" performs this dismissal; "Our symbol, then, is not Ariel, as Rodó thought, but rather Caliban" (14) ("Nuestro símbolo no es pues Ariel, como pensó Rodó, sino Calibán") (30). Fernández Retamar dismisses the whole in favor of the part. The only salvageable elements are the exhortations against North American cultural imperialism and indictment of Latin American *nordomania*, all else is in excess of this political line. Each critic will use the same language of editing and incision of the most "unfocused" or "misguided" aspects of the text. *Ariel*, it is suggested, is a narrative of excess, one that contains too much and is heavy with detail, burdened by the weight of style, overfull, and desperately in need of a cut-back. Fernández Retamar begins with a merciless cut, retaining only a small piece and fragment of the text because of its inherent "limitations" and because the whole is too unwieldy; "Rodó's limitations (and this is not the moment to elucidate them) are responsible for what he saw unclearly or failed to see at all. But what is worthy of note in this case is what he did indeed see and what continued to retain a certain amount of validity and even virulence" (14) ("Las limitaciones de Rodó, que no es éste el momento de elucidar, son responsables de lo que no vio o vio desenfocadamente. Pero lo que en su caso es digno de señalar es lo que sí vio, y que sigue conservando cierta dosis de vigencia y aun de virulencia") (31). The full impact of these incisions are evident in the language he uses to indict another critic of *Ariel*, Rodríguez Monegal, who attempts, in quite another kind of cut, to "emasculate" the text. Rodríguez Monegal is more fascinated with the aesthetics of the text than the possible critical rejection of United States' hegemony that might be salvaged from so much fluff. Fernández Retamar intones; "The fact that a servant of imperialism such as Rodríguez Monegal,

afflicted with the same *nordomania* that Rodó denounced in 1900, tries so coarsely to emasculate Rodó's work, only proves that it does indeed retain a certain virulence in its formulation -- something that we would approach today from other perspectives and with other means" (15) ("El hecho de que un servidor del imperialismo como Rodríguez Monegal, aquejado de la 'nordomanía' que en 1900 denunció Rodó, trate de emascular tan burdamente su obra, solo prueba que, en efecto, ella conserva cierta virulencia en su planteo, aunque hoy lo haríamos a partir de otras perspectivas y con otro instrumental") (33).

Ricardo Ortiz notes that Fernández Retamar launches a similar attack on Sarmiento for his unapologetic "nordomania" which is linked to a kind of nationalized jouissance or "unending orgasm" occasioned by his traversal of the North. Ortiz explains the possible motive for so strange a coupling: "The assignment of sexualized pathologies to two such disparate writers as Sarmiento and Rodríguez Monegal at least establishes that, without serious regard for the legitimate political problems one might encounter in their work, Fernández Retamar himself is not above damning them in large part through the rhetorical use of the sexual innuendo. And why not? This was very much in keeping with the spirit of the times in Cuba, where the slightest suggestion of a rumor of ideological or sexual deviance, or preferably both, could prove permanently damning" (37-38). This permanent damnation would serve to chop these writers up and banish them from the literary canon aimed at Cuban readers. For Ortiz, this is only part of the legacy of the "Calibanic" ideology that "demands further scrutiny" in order to "recast ... the work done subsequently in the United States and abroad in the name of 'Caliban'" (35); this unreconstructed work inherits the legacy of often explicit attempts to smear the queer. He traces the masculinist legacy from Fernández Retamar's chosen provenance in Martí through to Sarduy and Che's "new man" as part of a "¿Quién es más macho? Game" (40). The genealogy leads to contemporary critical uses of Caliban that play ambivalently within the terms of the sexualized game set out by Fernández Retamar. Fernández Retamar was not fond of another critic of *Ariel*, Carlos Fuentes, whom he aligns with bourgeois European intellectual culture and maligns, along with other Mexican intellectuals, as critical of the Cuban revolution. Fuentes's special place as headliner of the 1988 English translation of *Ariel* is crucial to the placement and emplotment of it. He begins his offerings in a uniquely unambiguous manner; "This is a supremely irritating book ... in Spanish, its rhetoric has become insufferable" (30). The prologue locates the topoi of leisure and cosmopolitanism as the primary objects of criticism; "Rodó belonged to the *modernista* movement, which sought a cosmopolitan atmosphere for Latin American poetry, cultivated art for art's sake, and affected an accompanying languor, elegantly settled into the semirecumbent position of turn-of-the-century ennui" (13). In a discussion of the *modernista* poets, the prologuist names his favorites momentarily displacing the subject of the prologue and setting up a competition and a significant juxtaposition: "The greatest of the *modernista* poets -- the herald and hero of the movement -- was the Nicaraguan Rubén Darío, of whom it was said that he had sent the galleons back to Spain. Darío could affect the greatest preciousness, but also concentrate on the starkest poetic statement, as in 'Lo fatal,' one of the clearest and most beautiful poems ever written in Latin America, or soar away into political bravura, as in his poems on Theodore Roosevelt, Walt Whitman, and the Spanish language" (13). Instead of Rodó we get the favored and ideal partner of Fuentes and Darío. Fuentes chimes in on a competition between the two, where Rodó remarks that, although technically competent, Darío does not rise to the status of poet of the Americas. It is by tacit opposition that we are led to understand that Darío, the favorite, is all that Rodó is not. That is, Darío is capable of combining the "greatest preciousness" with "political bravura" in a gendered range from feminine to masculine that signals balance. But this is all part of a game in which the attribution of femininity might bring down one's literary reputation.

Sylvia Molloy, writing about decadence and posing in Latin American literature, adds to this competitive rivalry between Darío and Rodó by foregrounding Rodó's criticism of Darío's precious rhetorical posturings; in a cardinally decadent move, he collapses interior and exterior by describing Darío's innards as surface, "his brain is steeped in perfumes and his heart enveloped in suede" (qtd. in "The Politics of Posing" 189). Molloy describes Rodó's three volume work *La vida nueva* as the poetic antidote to the pernicious posturing of his rival: "The third volume of *La vida nueva*

gave closure to the series, providing both the positive spiritual guidance that the first volume yearned for and a corrective to Darío's dangerous (yet attractive) posing, denounced in the second: an antidote to artifice, it contained Rodó's celebrated essay, *Ariel*. So in an ideological scenario of his own making, Rodó, the cultural diagnostician, first identified a need, then analyzed the 'unsatisfactory' remedy -- Darío's poetry of pose, which he simultaneously identified with and feared -- and then, barely one year after his piece on Darío, triumphantly proposed his own solution" ("The Politics of Posing" 189). This dynamic between Darío and Rodó, of ambivalence and rivalry, of attraction and repudiation, is one of the most deeply charged competitions of *modernismo* ; however the game is one-sided, since it is Rodó who is always trying to set the final agenda for national literary culture. Yet, for the critics, each is affected by the feminine tarnish of their affiliation with *modernismo*. For Fuentes, Darío does not fall too heavily on one side of the generic divide separating masculine from feminine. Rodó, on the other hand, "is not a poet and his range is not Darío's." His crime is "insufferable" excess and a small range, code for too much femininity, both of which have been conveniently edited away to the privilege of the English reader, who is unambiguously male; "The English-language reader, let me hasten to say, is privileged. *He* is reading Margaret Sayers Peden's superb translation, which, while being perfectly faithful, simply finds more neutral equivalents to some of Rodó's excesses" (14; my emphasis). Sayers Peden "eliminates long sentences and subordinate clauses in favor of shorter phrases that say exactly the same things written by Rodó, and, in general immerses the text in a kind of Erasmian serenity that contains a hint of Rodó's madness but denies it the pitfall of rhetorical madness" (14). The madness, for Fuentes, is transformed by the neutralization of its excess, made butch by the elimination of fluff and frill, and becomes meaningful with "the folly of urgent communication." Between "part one" and "part two," Fuentes refuels in shifting registers, the force of historical "fact" ameliorates the rhetorical folly to which the reader was exposed. Section Two of the prologue is a jaunt through the fields of colonial history where the reader is refreshed by the open air of history.

Fuentes's own revisionary tactics, consolidated by the neutering moves of the translator, are meant to create blindspots to classical reference and Greece. He affirms Rodó only in recasting Greece as a stepping stone to Nietzsche and not as the basis and stuff of the dialogue. The name of Nietzsche reforms and saves the text: "But if from Greece Rodó, a reader of *The Origin of Tragedy*, leads us to Nietzsche, well and good: The reading of Nietzsche gives *Ariel*, I think, its *huskier* moments; there is sometimes a lyrical-philosophical tone derived from *Zarathustra* and Rodó, on occasion, may rise to the excellent phrase, as in, "If we could cast the spirit of charity in the mold of Greek elegance, we would know perfection" (17). Nietzsche, for Fuentes, is the sign of masculinity, raising Greece from a state of being un-husky. Nietzsche's bad reputation for an expulsion of women and femininity from the scene of philosophy, is pitted against Rodó's equally bad reputation for textual effeminacy. Fuentes praises Rodó only in praising Nietzsche, yet Rodó nonetheless fails by approaching but not being Nietzschean enough. Rodó has failed more generally by not out-competing either opponent in the oratory contest conducted by Fuentes, each winner, Darío and Nietzsche, wins by virtue of a greater proximity to masculinity. *Ariel's* failure is its lack, the reader is now faced, post-prologue, with a text that is transgendered, not up to the masculine task of oration while listlessly and leisurely enjoying the excesses of narrative. What is *Ariel* beyond the critical admonishments of these critics and others like them? It is an undeniably elitist text that raises speculation and thought above action in the quest for cosmopolitanism. But why is the text so threatening that it has to be cut down and recast? For one, it threatens to displace the practical concerns of worker nationalism from the arena of culture in eliding 'culture' with 'high culture.' Also, the critics are phobic of the unambiguous homoeroticism coded in references to Greece and Plato and in the mature professor's idealization and adoration of male youths. It threatens to create a radically permissive national culture, to enact a truly cosmopolitan hospitality. The professor warns against a cosmophobia that finds difference suspect; "I have always disagreed with those who appointed themselves as watchdogs over the destiny of America and as custodians of its tranquility zealously attempted to stifle, even before it reaches us, any resonance of human sorrow, any echo of foreign literatures, whose pessimism or degeneracy might endanger the fragility of their optimism. No enlightened intelligence may be based in naïve isolation or voluntary ignorance" (38)

("Yo he conceptuado siempre vano el propósito de los que constituyéndose en avizores vigías del destino de América, en custodios de su tranquilidad, quisieran sofocar, con temeroso recelo, antes de que llegase a nosotros, cualquiera resonancia del humano dolor, cualquier eco venido de literaturas extrañas que, por triste o insano, ponga el peligro la fragilidad de su optimismo. Ninguna firme educación de la inteligencia puede fundarse en el aislamiento candoroso o en la ignorancia voluntaria") (155). Cosmopolitanism represented liberation from isolation and, perhaps more scandalously, hospitality for the outcast and openness to all thought beyond fears of degeneration.

Decadent and degenerate foreign literature was censored for its potential upset to social 'tranquility,' to cause unrest and disquiet. In the late nineteenth century, "degenerate" was consistently code for perversion and shorthand for homosexual. The love of art, poetry, the Greeks and the classical pedagogical model meant being an aesthete or a decadent, where the rarified literary and aesthetic tastes born by men of culture were passed on from man to boy. Moreover, the atmosphere of phobia is intense during this time shortly after the trial of the century when Oscar Wilde is imprisoned for "gross indecency" in 1895, his guilt is corroborated, during the trial, by his use of hyper-refined language and his love of the Greeks. The professorial Prospero hardly guards against these connotations and instead seduces and inducts his rapt male youths into the refined pleasure of rarified literary taste. For the critics, the very scene of *Ariel* is the source of its trouble; this private pedagogical scene is no place for the "youth of America" and certainly no place for the foundation of national culture. *Ariel* promotes a very different definition of work and action from that found in much of the nationalist rhetoric of the era. The status of action is different, it is a call to enact change through the act of thinking and the renovation of ideals rather than material actions. By withdrawing from the language and practice of labor, of productive labor, and moving towards its eponymous aims, spirit and thought, the text urges a hiatus, a rest from action and a return to thinking. Thinking is a sign of opposition, it is not-working in a society moving quickly towards materialism, where productive work and the worker define the highest social values. The hiatus is a temporary state, a pause for thought and review, and a much needed break.

The emphasis on the politics of the citizen-worker leans dangerously close to a Latin American corpus of *braceros* acting on orders from the North, an imminent threat of post-1898 United States imperialism. A division of labor threatens to cut across these North-South national boundaries at the expense of the worker who is used up and sacrificed by being, in Prospero's words, "obliged by the division of labor in his workplace to consume his life's energies in the unvarying routine of one mechanical chore" (43) ("a quien la división del trabajo de taller obliga a consumir en la invariable operación de un detalle mecánico todas la energías de su vida") (155). He warns against the blind demands of labor in the relentless course of modernity and offers a different path to being modern. The answer to the disjunctions and disembodied forces of modernization is found in revisiting the Greek polis; "Athens knew how to exalt both the ideal and the real, reason and instinct, the forces of the spirit and those of the body" (43) ("Atenas supo engrandecer a la vez el sentido de lo ideal y el de lo real, la razón y el instinto, las fuerzas del espíritu y las del cuerpo") (155). The example of the Greeks offers a lesson in balance and diversity, of work and leisure. The problem of state formations around nationalism was not just that women were excluded, although they were, but that all manner of association away from the norm of worker-nationalism was devalued. Nationalism was exclusionary for political expediency and efficiency, for modernity right now, but the sacrifices exacted by this rhetoric made it impossible to theorize hospitality. *Ariel* suggests a more tenable model of cosmopolitanism, one that accounts for the problems and contradictions of creating national culture that is at once bound and unbound, grants rights to its citizens, extends hospitality to foreigners, and that is able to contain the past and open out to the future. This difficult idea of cosmopolitan nationalism is theorized in *Ariel* in the parable of the hospitable king. The parable serves as a break from the work of the preceding lecture as it allegorizes the virtues of resting from labor, of balance and, of course, hospitality:

What now comes to my mind from a dusty corner of memory is a story that illustrates what our souls should be. There was once a patriarchal King who lived in the fabled and uncomplicated Oriental lands that served as the happy source of many tales. This King reigned during the innocent years of the tents of Ishmael and the palaces of Pylos. In man's memory he came to be called the Hospitable King. The charity of this King was inex-

haustible. Any misfortune seemed to disappear in the boundlessness of his mercy as if sinking of his own weight. The hungry seeking bread were drawn to his generous welcome, as were the sick at heart longing for the balm of a soothing word. Like the most sensitive sounding board, this King's heart resonated to the rhythms of those about him. His palace was the home of all his people. Freedom and liveliness reigned within this majestic edifice, and no guards stood at the gates to deny entry. Among the open colonnades, shepherds at their leisure played their rustic serenades; old men gathered to gossip as evening fell; and serene groups of young women arranged blossoms and boughs in willow baskets -- the only taxes exacted in the kingdom. Merchants from Ophir, traders from Damascus, came and went through the wide gates at all hours, and a wealth of silks, jewels, and perfumes competed for the King's attention. The weary pilgrim found his rest beside the King's very throne. Birds flocked at midday to peck crumbs from his table, and at dawn rollicking bands of children ran to the foot of the bed where the silver-bearded King slept, to announce the new day. The King's infinite generosity extended to both the hapless and the inanimate. Nature, too, felt the attraction of the King's generosity. As in the myth of Orpheus and the legend of St. Francis of Assisi, winds, birds, plants seemed to befriend human creatures in that oasis of hospitality. (45-46)

Encuentro el símbolo de lo que debe ser nuestra alma en un cuento que evoco de un empolvado rincón de mi memoria. Era un rey patriarcal, en el Oriente indeterminado e ingenuo donde gusta hacer nido la alegre bandada de los cuentos. Vivía su reino la candorosa infancia de las tiendas de Ismael y los palacios de Pilos. La tradición le llamó después, en la memoria de los hombres, el rey hospitalario. Inmensa era la piedad del rey. A desvanecerse en ella tendía, como por su propio peso, toda desventura. A su hospitalidad acudían lo mismo por blanco pan el miserable que el alma desolada por el bálsamo de la palabra que acaricia. Su corazón reflejaba, como sensible placa sonora, el ritmo de los otros. Su palacio era la casa del pueblo. Todo era libertad y animación dentro de este augusto recinto, cuya entrada nunca hubo guardas que vedasen. En los abiertos pórticos, formaban corro los pastores cuando consagraban a rústicos conciertos sus ocios; platicaban al caer la tarde los ancianos; y frescos grupos de mujeres disponían, sobre trenzados juncos, las flores y los racimos de que se componía únicamente el diezmo real. Mercaderes de Ofir, buhoneros de Damasco, cruzaban a toda hora las puertas anchurosas, y ostentaban en competencia ante las miradas del rey, las telas, las joyas, los perfumes. Junto a su trono reposaban los abrumados peregrinos. Los pájaros se citaban al mediodía para recoger las migajas de su mesa; y con el alba, los niños llegaban en bandas bulliciosas al pie del lecho en que dormía el rey de barba de plata y le anunciaban la presencia del sol. Lo mismo a los seres sin ventura que a las cosas sin alma alcanzaba su liberalidad infinita. La Naturaleza sentía también la atracción de su llamado generoso; vientos, aves y plantas parecían buscar -- como en el mito de Orfeo y en la leyenda de San Francisco de Asís -- la amistad humana en aquel oasis de hospitalidad. (158-59)

In the parable of the Hospitable King, we return to the question of a cosmopolis as a cosmotopia. It offers a radical inclusiveness as a gesture that is infinite, boundless and extended across species and genre, from the "hapless" to the "inanimate." The tale makes reference to figures of the Old Testament, to Ishmael and the palaces of Pylos. Ishmael is the son of Abraham and Hagar. Sarah, unable to conceive, offers her servant Hagar to Abraham that she might bear his child. Yet, when Sarah suddenly bears Isaac, Hagar and Ishmael are cast out into the desert, where they, exiled and dying from thirst, are offered refuge from an angel of the Lord. Ishmael, literally "God may hear," stands in for all social outcasts. The setting of the parable as contemporaneous with the story of Ishmael suggests a countering of mythologies of inclusion and hospitality against those of exclusion and exile. Ishmael is emblematic of the King's guest, once outcast and now enjoying refuge; which implies that the King's hospitality is like that of God, total and all-encompassing. The analogies of hospitality are various, the parable adds the devotion of Orpheus to St. Francis of Assisi's protective care of all earthly things and people; "as in the myth of Orpheus and the legend of St. Francis of Assisi." The reference to St. Francis of Assisi corroborates the overall sense of an infinite embrace of all things -- St. Francis of Assisi was renowned for literally preaching to the birds. Rodó uses mythology to encourage an expansion of the capacity to imagine a vast and infinite hospitality, a hospitality that must first be thought.

In light of the greater cosmopolitan purpose of *Ariel*, the parable alludes to yet another analogy of hospitality in the Kantian cosmopolitan ethics of neighborly generosity. Kant's essay, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch," concerns this issue of a radical hospitality in which all of the inhabitants of the world would have the cosmopolitan *right* to hospitality everywhere. Kant enables a rethinking of the notion of hospitality from the benevolent philanthropy of the King to an inalienable *right* of all; "*hospitality* means the right of a stranger not to be treated with hostility when he arrives on someone else's territory" (105). This hospitality would be guaranteed against a hostile history of domination of one region/state/nation against another in a world-wide recognition of the rights of all: "The idea of a cosmopolitan right is therefore not fantastical and overstrained; it is a necessary complement to the unwritten code of political and international right, transforming it

into a universal right of humanity. Only under this condition may we flatter ourselves that we are continually advancing towards a perpetual peace" (108). Cosmopolitanism is the "highest purpose of nature" with perpetual peace as the ideal and aim of this boundless hospitality. For Kant, hospitality is a right and unwritten law, yet for Rodó, it is the stuff of thought and of thinking, of imagination. That is, for hospitality to achieve its aim of infinity and boundlessness, the King must be absent but not effaced. The King must cross the threshold from action into thought, from the exterior Kingdom to the interior chamber of thought where he performs the work of theorizing hospitality. For Rodó such an infinite thought requires undisrupted contemplation and meditation. The parable ends with the notion that constitutes what critics deride as a sign of the excesses of the essay, leisure. Leisure in its classical formulation is read through and in this parable is the stuff and condition for philosophical reflection: "The ancients, in their wisdom, included my visitors within the family of *otium*, the wise use of leisure, which they held as the highest example of rational life -- thought freed from any ignoble yoke. Noble leisure was the investment of time that they expressed as a superior mode of life opposed to commercial enterprise. Having linked the concept of dignity of life exclusively with the aristocratic idea of repose, the spirit of classicism finds its correction and its complement in our modern belief in the dignity of labor. The rhythm formed from repose and action is so desirable that no man should need urging to maintain it" (47) / ("Los antiguos los clasificaban dentro de su noble inteligencia del ocio, que ellos tenían por el más elevado empleo de una existencia verdaderamente racional, identificándolo con la libertad del pensamiento emancipado de todo innoble yugo. El ocio noble era la inversión del tiempo que oponían, como expresión de la vida superior, a la actividad económica. Vinculada exclusivamente a esa alta y aristocrática idea del reposo su concepción de la dignidad [de la vida, el espíritu clásico encuentra su corrección y su complemento en nuestra moderna creencia en la dignidad] del trabajo útil; y entrambas atenciones del alma pueden componer, en la existencia individual, un ritmo sobre cuyo mantenimiento necesario nunca será inoportuno insistir") (161). Labor had become such a prized activity that it was performed to excess, making it necessary to "preach to the North Americans the 'gospel of relaxation'" (79) ("necesario predicar a los norteamericanos el Evangelio del descanso o el recreo") (205) based on the classical notion of *otium*. Rodó links leisure to work as two elements of the same rhythmic movement; this doesn't displace national identity-formation around the state worker, but offers a complement to the work-only model. Rodó questions the U.S. culture of work; "Does the feverish restlessness that seems to magnify the activity and intensity of their lives have a truly worthwhile objective, and does that stimulus justify their impatience?" (78) ("Esa febricitante inquietud que parece centuplicar en su seno el movimiento y la intensidad de la vida, ¿tiene un objeto capaz de merecerla y un estímulo bastante para justificarla?") (204). The aim of work in the North is material gain which leads only to a loss of national character and the dissolution of cultural identity, creating "a singular impression of insufficiency and emptiness" (79) ("una singular impresión de insuficiencia y de vacío") (205). In the classical model of education, leisure is the basis of all things and, more importantly, it is the end or aim of work. Rodó is not promoting the life of leisure, a privilege of the ruling class, but the "wise use of leisure," which will manifest differently according to the manner of work and the disposition of the subject.

The interior spaces, inner worlds and chambers of *modernista* narratives were recurring tropes that established a separation from the world at large and business as usual, usually as the space of the creative act. González Echevarría notes that the inner chamber comprises the architecture of authoritarianism. Yet, Gerard Aching argues against interpreting these spaces as socially removed and politically inert zones: "Darío, for example, promoted this realm as the unique source of his talent, influence, and fame. With its thick walls and tranquil inner recesses, the architecture of this figurative space lends itself to the conception of a subjectivity that is either besieged or geared for an offensive. These bellicose postures are scarcely the kind that one would associate with a group of presumably self-absorbed aesthetes; but for those who subscribe to the evasive detachment hypothesis, it is the walls of this *reino interior* that by definition resist or confront the social" (27). These realms analogized the separation of art from the dailiness of life, the rich from the poor, the cultured elite from the uncultured masses, and leisured spaces from workplaces. This

is certainly the case in the economies of *modernismo*, in which poets found work and the materialities of daily life beneath them; while their "work," the work of art, was so invaluable as to determine all value. Aching examines the literary work and larger historical context in which Darío propagated the importance of the *reino interior*. The trope of interiority was politically contradictory; it was a defiant rejection of the materialism of capitalist culture while it was an aristocratic pose beyond the denigration of the masses. This was the larger culture of the literary movement, which is inflected in, but that might be ultimately distinct, from the aim of cosmopolitanism in the parable of *Ariel*.

Rodó's parable recasts leisure as a strategic stopgap on the way to the work of cosmopolitanism. The shift from the outer world of the Kingdom to inner chamber of the King is crucial to the aim of the parable; "And even though no human accompanied the aged King to his mysterious refuge, his hospitality was as generous as ever" (47) ("aun cuando a nadie fuera dado acompañarle hasta allí, su hospitalidad seguía siendo en el misterioso seguro tan generosa y grande como siempre") (160). The Hospitable King has not really been hospitable until the action has shifted into thought, and, drawing on Kant, into theory and subsequently into a right. The very ability to imagine hospitality as a right and an obligation, an abstraction, is an effect of thought that is, in turn, an effect of leisure. Only through this rhythm of work and leisure might the possibility of hospitality be realized. Moreover, the parable locates the difficulty faced by all thinkers of cosmopolitanism from the turn of the nineteenth century to the present: the difficulty of liberating thought from social prejudice and phobia and the difficulty of being truly hospitable. Although *Ariel* is hardly a model or exemplary text that transcends the problems of community and cosmopolitanism, the force and rhetoric of the criticism of *Ariel* offer some insight into the failures of collective agendas. The union formed over the edited and injured *Ariel*, forecloses on the possibility of thinking cosmopolis as a scene of hospitality a scene of unbounded inclusion. The parable of the hospitable king restores cosmopolitanism to its fundamental basis, returning it to the possibility of hospitality where the outcast figures of speculation and imagination, of the strange and queer, might find refuge. Yes, the rhetoric of *Ariel* is insufferable and its classical boys-only model is tiresomely narrow, yet the refusal of North American materialism is admirable and it ventures onto terrain untraversed by many other modernists. In the end, it retains the most useful model of cosmopolitanism, one forgotten in the relentless drive to be modern. América is urged to rethink the problem of hospitality manifest in immigration policy, rights of guests and workers, rights of the queer and the outcast, and of all manner of difference from the norms of men-at-work nationalism. It is not the América that is present in the materiality and physicality of work, but one that remains to be thought, an ideal, like cosmopolitanism, that is yet to be achieved: "Can you envision it, this America we dream of? Hospitable to the world of the spirit, which is not limited to the throngs that flock to seek shelter in her. Pensive, without lessening her aptitude for action. Serene and firm, in spite of her generous enthusiasms. Resplendent, with the charm of an incipient, calm purpose that recalls the expression on a child's face when the germ of a troubled thought begins to disturb its captivating grace. Hold this America in your thoughts" (94) ("¿No la veréis vosotros, la América que nosotros soñamos; hospitalaria para las cosas del espíritu, y no tan sólo para las muchedumbres que se amparen a ella; pensadora, sin menoscabo de su aptitud para la acción; serena y firme a pesar de sus entusiasmos generosos; resplandeciente con el encanto de una seriedad temperana y suave, como la que realza la expresión de un rostro infantil cuando en él se revela, al través de la gracia intacta que fulgura, el pensamiento inquieto que despierta? ... Pensad en ella a lo menos; el honor de vuestra historia futura depende de que tengáis constantemente ante los ojos del alma la visión de esa América" (223-24).

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